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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Buenos Aires

December 13, 1979

[REDACTED]
Claus W. Ruser, Esquire
Director
Office of East Coast Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
(X) Release () Excise () Deny
Exemption(s): N/R
Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

Dear Claus:

This is in reply to your letter of December 7 to
Ambassador Castro.

Visitor Exchanges

[REDACTED] I suspect there has not been a meeting of the
minds on this topic. You suggest that you and ICA will
meet on who might be invited to the U.S. and that you would
like to respond positively to an exchange proposal of the
University of Belgrano. It would appear to us that these
initiatives would preempt the responsibilities of the
Embassy's IV Committee and the Fulbright Commission. The
IV Committee has the glorious total of about a dozen grants
to allocate among our various priority audiences as defined
by the GORM and the USICA Country Plan. If you can come up
with additional resources for exchanges, we would be
delighted; and if the exchange possibilities are only non-
funded invitations, it is always a useful effort. As it is,
however, we devote a great deal of effort to allocating our
very slender IV budget to the top priority targets.

[REDACTED] Your thoughts on a seminar dealing with
Argentine and U.S. policy are really daring, in the light
of the results of the American University Seminar last year.
I have already commented on the feasibility of this kind of
activity.

Jewish Concerns

[REDACTED] We will always make every effort to respond to the
inquiries of Rabbi Rosenthal, and hope he has confidence that
we are giving full attention to his concerns. You are, of

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course, aware that his view of the Argentine situation is not shared by all -- or perhaps even a majority of the local representatives of the Jewish community. It seems unlikely that there will ever be a consensus on his view of anti-Semitism and its cure in Argentina. We can deal with his specific inquiries and requests and will be replying to his ADL Top Ten List promptly. We will ask other community leaders for their views on his statement that some 1,000 political prisoners are Jewish. We do not believe that any Argentine official would comprehend the idea that the GOA should be forthcoming on prisoners because of Timerman's forbearance (Timerman's December 11 article in the New York Times has just this moment reached my desk).

Disappearances

Townie tells me that there are no confirmed disappearances since October 1. His cable on this will report that a number of people arrested for subversive activity have been located in jails. This could represent a major change in the GOA's treatment of suspected subversives.

Threat to Bob Cox

Bob Cox's departure is becoming the news and social event of the month. Virtually all the press has carried detailed stories of his departure and the events leading up to it. They are now reporting in some detail on the various luncheons and dinners which are being given honoring him. I had him for lunch with some of the staff on Monday. You can be sure that the implied threat against Friedman and Freeman has been given proper attention. This is not the first time such threats have come to our attention and our reaction has always been to raise them at the highest level in the GOA, including with General Viola, and with all of the security services. On a number of occasions, Tony Freeman has gone to various security officers to explain exactly what he does and to offer any further information in which they might be interested. Should there ever be any indication their security is seriously threatened, we would have them on a plane immediately while making the appropriate complaints to the GOA.

Parole Program

(U) Ken Sackett and INS Officer Martin experienced some difficulty in receiving access to parole program candidates at La Plata yesterday. The Ministry of Interior is apparently quibbling about their right to see prisoners. I went

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to our new office director at the Fonoff, Tomás Alva Negri, first thing this morning to register our concern that this program was being derailed. We suspect that the problems arise from staff changes in Interior and if they are not promptly resolved, we will escalate.

Saragovi Case

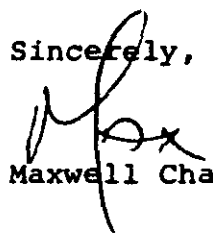
■ We are reliably informed of a good-faith effort to obtain commutation of his sentence before Christmas. His mother is asking that no public demands be made before a decision is rendered. We are modestly hopeful that he will be released.

Kennedy Emissary

(U) Yet another source, a young Peronist politician, reported this week that an emissary of Senator Kennedy, a Mr. Butler, had been visiting Peronist politicians in Córdoba recently. Two weeks ago the Time stringer Nina Lindley called to report much the same thing. If the gentleman is here, it is a poorly-kept secret.

Best regards,

Sincerely,


Maxwell Chaplin

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